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Senate

LANCE CORPORAL RICHARD CHAD CLIFTON

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I set aside a few moments today to reflect on the life of Marine LCpl Richard Chad Clifton. Chad epitomized the best of our country's brave men and women who fought to free Iraq and to secure a new democracy in the Middle East. He exhibited unwavering courage, dutiful service to his country, and above all else, honor. In the way he lived his life, and how we remember him, Chad reminds each of us how good we can be.

A resident of Milton, Chad's passing has deeply affected the community. A 2003 graduate of Cape Henlopen High School. Chad was the son of Richard C. and Terri Clifton. Friends, family, and school officials recalled Chad Clifton as smart, funny, laid back, and carefree; an all-around good person. He viewed the Marine Corps as an opportunity to gain life experience. An aspiring writer, Chad said being overseas was providing a reservoir of experiences to write about.

Chad always had a strong interest in the military. He spent more than 3 years as a member of the Cape Henlopen High School Junior ROTC program. His participation in that program enabled me to meet him last year and talk about his interest in serving the United States of America. His interest also came from his grandfather, a Korean War veteran, who earned the Purple Heart. That medal will be buried with Richard Chad Clifton.

After graduating from high school, Chad underwent basic training at Parris Island, SC before being stationed at Camp Pendleton, CA. Chad became a member of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment. He died in combat in the Al Anbar province in western Iraq.

Chad was a remarkable and well-respected young soldier. His friends and family remember him as an officer and gentleman with an acid wit and an appreciation for music and art. He enjoyed writing, listening to heavy metal, and watching television sitcom reruns. As his mother remembers, "He was pure potential with a good heart."

Today, commemorate Chad, celebrate his life, and offer his family our support and our deepest sympathy on their tragic loss.